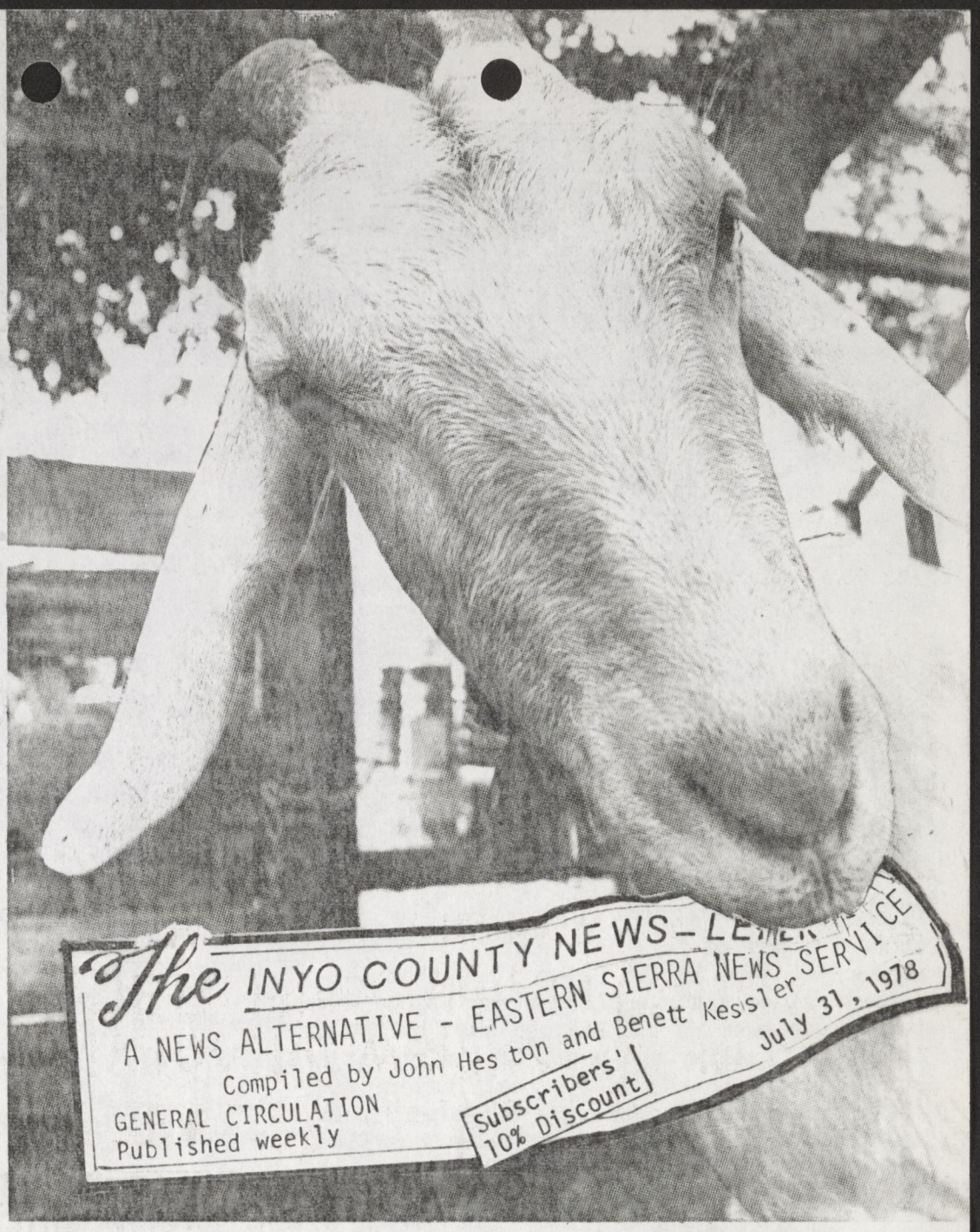
THIS IS SALLY. *Sally is a Lone Pine goat. Which is like no other goat anywhere, as goats go. Sally has goat-like tastes. Some people say goats will eat anything. We can believe it. Some people may be right. It sure looks like Sally is eating the NEWS-LETTER masthead. Some editors think it is demeaning and undignified to play around with the masthead. They may be right, too. But this editor thinks they're a lot of old goats. He just couldn't pass up this joint effort by the NEWS-LETTER photo and art departments. As for Sally, you can meet her down at Bob Harke's place in Lone Pine. Take the family: The kids can feed Sally some old NEWS-LETTER mastheads. Harke will love that. It makes the goat-milk better. More about Harke and his menagerie on the NEWS-LET-Fotopage, inside this issue.*

Lots more, too: There's NOTES FROM B.K., Stories about the water issue, a road-widening, housing in Inyo County, the letters on the FORUM page, and a lot you'll want to know about.

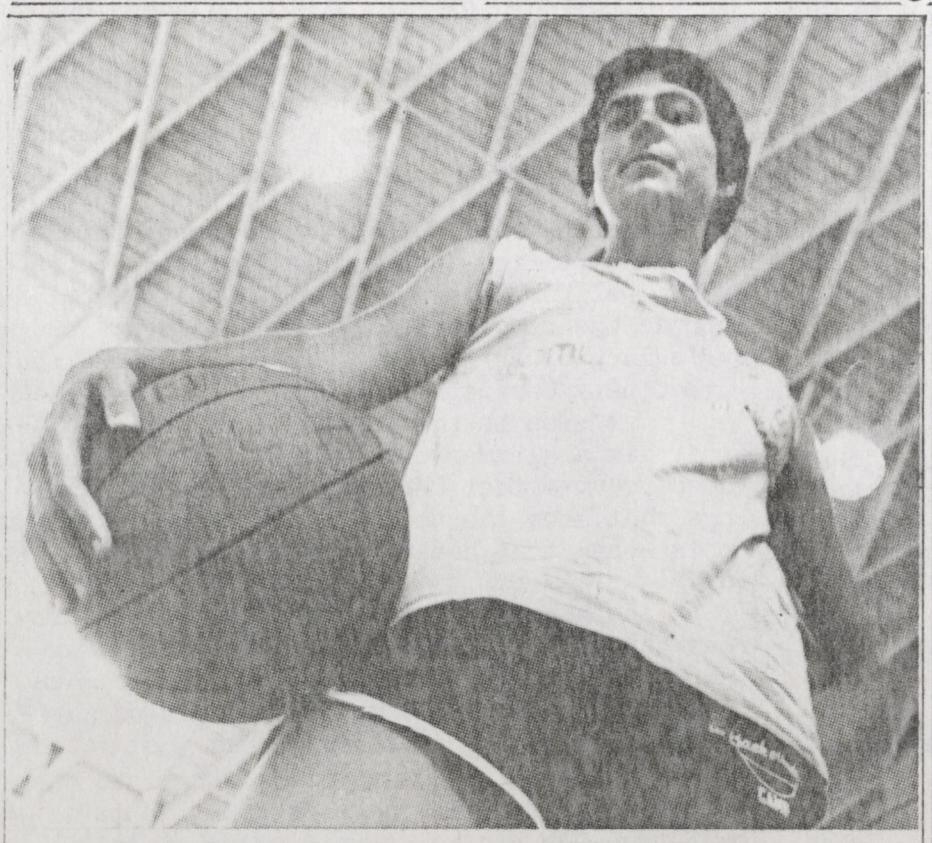


The INYO COUNTY NEWS-LE... A NEWS ALTERNATIVE - EASTERN SIERRA NEWS SERVICE
Compiled by John Hes ton and Benett Kessler
GENERAL CIRCULATION
Published weekly
Subscribers' 10% Discount
July 31, 1978

HOUSING: Mostly for the well-to-do, in Inyo P. 4

PUBLIC DEFENDER: Hired within the law ? P. 13

News Briefs P. 13 • FORUM P. 12 • Highway Radar; maybe



BASKETBALL INSTRUCTOR; A LITTLE-GIRL'S-EYE-VIEW
A basketball camp attracts the kids. More on P. 3,11.

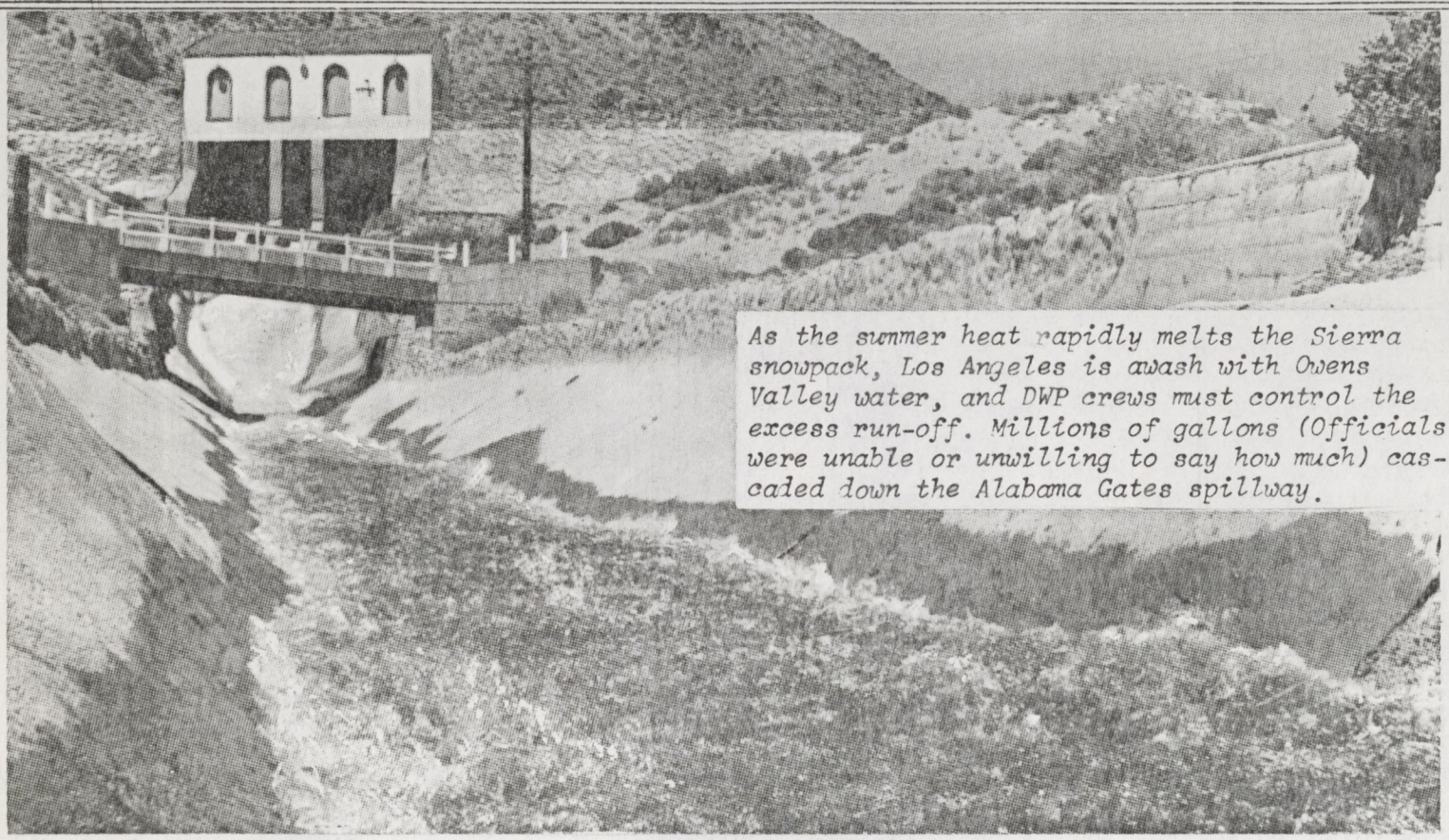
The COUNTY

Water Report

A HYDROLOGIST'S STUDY MAY SHOW THE FIRST REAL FACTS

ALMOST AS AN AD LIB or as an aside casually uttered from upstage right, Inyo County's staff hydrologist last week stated his official water report and it became what may be a crucial revelation in the greater drama of the Inyo-DWP water battle. And even as Hydrologist Phil Williams read his telling lines into the act, the attorneys for Los Angeles doggedly went back into court in two separate cases - one of them in an effort to outflank an Inyo action that prevents DWP from putting water meters on Inyo lines, the other attempting to find out, in effect, just what kind of environmental impact report will be acceptable to the court in the groundwater pumping issue. If Williams' figures are

(See WATER ISSUE, Page 2)



As the summer heat rapidly melts the Sierra snowpack, Los Angeles is awash with Owens Valley water, and DWP crews must control the excess run-off. Millions of gallons (Officials were unable or unwilling to say how much) cascaded down the Alabama Gates spillway.

WATER ISSUE, Continued

accurate, and so far there seems to be no real reason to doubt it, it is probable that the Department of Water and Power may itself have to include them in the EIR demanded by the high court. The quality and depth of the report become apparent to the most casual reader; and the decision, months ago, by the supervisors to hire a hydrologist to get the scientific facts of Owens Valley water seems now to have been a right one.

Simply stated, Williams' exhaustive study substantiates what many have suspected all along: that DWP's estimates, its figures and it predictions concerning the state of affairs under the Owens Valley - and also above it - have been little more than self-serving fabrications. Groundwater pumping has caused, and will further cause, inestimable damage to the entire ecosystem of the valley and has drained as a vampire the life-fluids that sustain the valley's vegetation and much of its animal life. Here, in part, are some of Williams' findings, the result of almost a year's scientific investigation:

* "There have been extensive declines in the shallow water table throughout the whole of the valley floor since 1970."

*Most of the decline is attributed to pumping between 1970 and 1972 ("The two years immediately after pumping started."), and the extent of the decline is much greater than reported or predicted by DWP in its flawed EIR.

* The amount of valley vegetation that has been affected by the pumping is greater than DWP has stated; more plants have died than DWP estimated.

*The DWP has "assumed too many things," like the idea that the valley ground has "confined aquifers," and that a drain occurs only at certain levels.

* That the "misinterpretation of test well data" has contributed to DWP's inaccurate findings, as well as "the subjective nature of it's (DWP's) vegetation impact analysis."

*Several previously free-flowing springs in the valley have dried up since pumping began. Example: Fish Springs, which produced more than 21,000 acre-feet of water per year now gives 0. The same is true for others.

Upon receipt of the hydrologist's report, District Attorney L.H. "Buck" Gibbons was elated. "This," he said, "is the first time anyone has done a study besides DWP. It shows how a basin study can be approached, plus concrete results. It shows there has been a substantial draw-down in the basin. It is a much more scientific job than the department had demonstrated."

So what will be the effect of the report in the practical affairs of Inyo-DWP relationships and litigation? Gibbons said that remains to be seen, that use of the report is "a very major step." Gibbons did say with some conviction that DWP should use the study for their new EIR soon to be released.

As for the water metering suit now pending, DWP will go int court on next Monday to ask for a change of venue. And still another, somewhat chilling factor in the metering issue: DWP will probably attempt to make much of a piece of emergency legislation signed, ironically enough, by Gov. Jerry Brown this month: That legislation basically says that when utility rates are re-structured (or structured) to recover operating costs, the agency involved is exempt from the "ordinary" requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act, such as the requirement of an EIR. It was on DWP's lack of an EIR in the metering issue that Inyo County based its case.

But even in that case, the district attorney saw a glimmer of hope: The legislation "does require that DWP have a report of findings that show the need for meters to cover its costs - and that has not been on the record so far."

Another official commented: "It's ludicrous for them to install a residential metering system to save 1400 acre feet a year when they have destroyed so many thousands of acre-feet." Many others would concur as they watch millions of gallons of water flowing into the valley and into Owens lakebed. (See photo above.) But DWP escapes criticism on at least two points: the water company has yet to be blamed for excessive candor or credibility. In the final act, the courts may yet find truth.

»» NOTES FROM B.K. ««


BENETT KESSLER

THE COST OF PLAYING THE PIANO in a grand (or even baby grand) style is spiralling out of the reach of most folk. Says on piano dealer in the area: "The cost has doubled in recent years. A baby grand piano runs from five to six thousand dollars, and up, depending on the quality of the piano." A piano professional told me last week that Japan - would you believe !? - is now sending us "American name" pianos along with its Sonys and Hondas. The American manufacturers are assembling their instruments over there to avoid high labor costs here. Also a few good Japanese pianos are being made. It may be that the guitar (the simplistic instrument of the Hippy '60's) is on its way out and people are turning more and more to romantic melodies. Increasing demands for pianos.

***

BUT IF ROCK IS ON THE WAY OUT, nobody could know it to judge by the Big Pine "Grapevine Festival." The annual festival has become big business, along with similar shows promoted by a pair of Big Pine entrepreneurs, Bob and Stan Steele. Bob Steele tells us more than 3000 people camped, danced, applauded and cheered the six bands he signed for the local bash. They also went through 50 kegs of beer "just as a starter," and brought in unopposed "all the pot they wanted." Each party-goer laid out $5 for the privilege to listen to country and rock sounds that - in our view - were forgettable. But, as they say, a good time was had by all. The Steeles keep the festival orderly, kind of, ...with 30 bouncers who, this year, had to deal with only one serious incident. Seems a drunk pulled a knife, but he was subdued by the crowd and then, according to a Steele cohort, "It all worked out okay with no problem; the guy he was going to stab kicked him in the head and we didn't have any trouble."

***

CLASSY SHOW. RIGHT? The Steeles say next year it may be even bigger. They're dickering with DWP for a bigger chunk of land to stage their beer bust; at present they have about seven acres.

***

A FEATURE OF THE GRAPEVINE GIG WAS A "WET T-shirt contest" for the gals. It was won by someone from Palm Springs, although we didn't know people from Palm Springs went to things like the Grapevine Festival. "Wet T-Shirt Contests," which appeal primarily to the beer and pot crowd, go over real big, we're sure, with the feminists. Maybe that's the *real* reason they're marching on Washington these days. One festivalgoer, a male, delightedly reports on how the contestants "took off the T-shirts" after the contest. Such is the state of the musical arts in Inyo County. Great stuff.

***

COUNTY SUPERVISOR RICHARD McDONALD has taken quite literally the voters' demand to "trim the fat." He's looking great after dropping 75 pounds. But his sudden removal of excess *avoir-du-pois* has given rise to some speculation: In terms of poundage what is the collective weight of Inyo's board of supervisors? And do trim, wirey, active people *really* think better?

***

AND SO LONG AS WE'RE DEALING IN HAM we might mention two other kinds: the Hollywood kind and the smoked kind. The TV and film star Chuck Connors blew through town the other day and made a (usual) stop at Meadow Farms where he purchased a few of the smoked variety to send to friends. Filmland has kept a hungry eye on Bishop's Meadow Farms plant since 'way back in the 20's when on-location film crews found out that Bishop turns out about the best fancy meats you can buy. Other regulars on the Meadow Farms customer list who frequently stop in: Vince Edwards (Dr. Ben Casey); Paul Newman and Charlton Heston (who is a tiny bit more famous as a movie star than as a second-or-third cousin to Our Man Heston. Right, John?) Another Meadow Farms fan is *L.A. Times* Publisher Otis Chandler.

***

SO HOW ABOUT A MOTORCYCLE VACATION TO CANADA? That's the trip for Sheriff and Ms. Floyd Barton; the Don Talmadge's (coroner); and Clyde Coons and his missus (Bishop public works director.)

***

FEMALES NOW HAVE "PERMISSION TO HAVE A PASSION for sports," says Pro Basketballer Maggie Nelson. She's 22, a Stanford graduate, and was drafted into the American Women's Pro-League as a top-rated center...so she opted for a trip to Europe to play. Maggie, who was here as one of the coaches in the girl's basketball camp pictured elsewhere in these pages, says women's sports still don't compare with those of men, "but they're improving." For those interested, I guess that's good news, although I've never been a fan of the gung-ho competitive types of sports; when I've gone to games (male or female), I keep finding in myself a certain detached unconcern for who wins. But of course that is not to say that the ability, (for instance) of eleven big hefty guys to carry an inflated piece of leather over a chalk line from fifty or sixty yards away is not of world-shaking importance.

***

LONE PINE'S CURRENT HEROINE (whose efforts at a bad accident saved a man's life several days ago) was herself taken to the Lone Pine hospital last week. Tabeth Lightner, the Tri-County ambulance EMT, underwent a tonsilectomy. She's recovering.

***

A MOVIE CONTRACT DISPUTE erupted here in the county last week when Matthew Nodella of GJL Productions offered two Independence motel owners $350 for using their place as a set in the filming of *And One Alone Survived*, Lauren Elder's adventure story about her plane crash and survival in the Sierra near Independence. Motel Owners G.A. and Claudine Logsdon of Independence argue that Nodella & company have so far failed to include in the contract any guarantees against "disturbances" caused by the shooting sessions; no time deadline to complete the filming, etc. Their motel was one that got some negative publicity in the half-truths in part of Elder's book.

***

AMONG THE DINING-OUT CROWD: Mary and Glenn Taylor, celebrating a birthday (Mary's) up at the Paradise with Optometrist Carl Muth and Ms. Muth, the supervisor. Also in the party: Lucy and Bob Harding. At another dinner party nearby at Art & Dolly's: Jack and Jean Brodbeck, Mary Ford, Red and Lou Obring, Les Thomas.

(More from B.K. on Page 4)

NOTES FROM B.K., Continued

HE WAS ALL DRESSED IN HIS RUNNING SHORTS the other pm when I ran (using the term loosely) into Dr. Thaddeus Kostrubala at a fire. He's the author of *The Joy of Running*, a popular book that claims, among other things, that jogging clears the head. The author uses it as a therapy for his patients. In a recent article in *TIME* magazine the impressive psychiatrist with the impressive name was quoted as saying jogging is a treatment "for depression, drug addiction and schizophrenia," that it also "makes people more talkative and breaks down social barriers between a know-it-all therapist and a passive patient." The good doctor is a cool one himself; managed somehow to talk in an interview while taking a few worried side glances at the firemen and the deputy putting out the fire in his car there at roadside. He and his wife, Teresa, have bought a home at Mammoth; to get to their front door one has to Sno-mobile or ski (or, presumably, jog through snow) to get to the front door. The doc's on our Fotopage. One "runs" into the nicest people these days!

***

ALWAYS THE BIG QUESTION AMONG THE LOCAL RADIO people: What do the people out there *really* want? Rock? Country-Western? Big band sounds? The surveys (what few have been taken) bring confused statistics, but "soft-rock" pops and C-W seem to lead the polls. But who's listening from 9 to midnight on Friday and Saturday nights? At least one local talent says he thinks "the kids are," and he's trying to get a tight rock-show together to sell, maybe, to KIOQ. He'd be the dee-jay producer, etc. And there are those who think it might click. Now it's a matter of sponsors....

***

CATTLE RUSTLER AT INDEPENDENCE. The Neel Bells are up to here with people stealing calves to butcher. Most recent loss: a heifer of the black angus variety distinguishable by a white spot near the navel. With the price of beef what it is, there's more than a little of this going on. Keep your eye out for white spots near navels, folks.

***

MAY ALL YOUR CALVES BE SAFE, and...May the news in your day be good news every day...

- Sincerely, BK

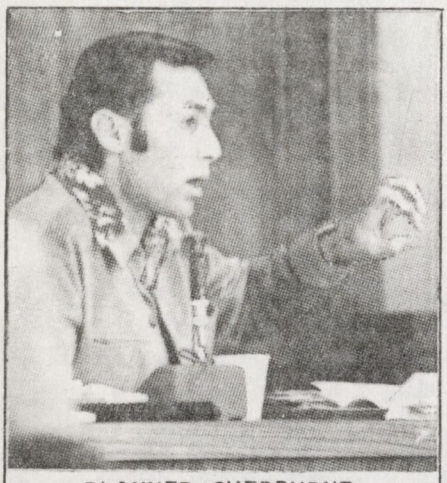
$75,000 AND UP - WAY UP

HOUSING: Only for a few

INYO'S BUILDERS AND DEVELOPERS MAY BE ENTERING A BOOM ERA; LOTS OF HOUSES ARE ON THE DRAWING BOARD AND BEING BUILT, BUT NEARLY ALL ARE PRICED BEYOND REACH OF THOSE WHO NEED THEM THE MOST.

HOUSING AND TRACT DEVELOPMENTS loom large as *the* boom industries in Inyo right now - and for many reasons: plenty of ready investment capital; lower property taxes; the urge among moneyed southlanders to get away from urban smog, crime and crowding.

Another plus for the builders: completion of the Bishop sewer project which opened up West Bishop to sub-divisions and developments. Literally hundreds of houses are in various stages of construction from drawing board to sales contract.



PLANNER SHERBURNE
diversity....stability

And yet.....And yet Inyo County continues with its perennial "housing problem," and many people continue their search for a place to live.

Upon moving to Inyo County, the "average" wage earner attracted by Inyo's essentially sub-urban setting far removed from city tensions, finds himself with a new problem; the tight squeeze between (comparatively) low wages and scarcity of jobs, and the high cost for a place to live. The social, economic, ecological and demographic considerations are beginning to arouse increasing concern among those who are involved; ike Inyo's Planning Director Doug Sherburne: "It's a very basic principle," avers Sherburne, "In ecology, diversity provides stability." And that condition of "stability," in planning and socioeconomic terms, is lacking here.

The problem is simple: Most people in search of a house find that those available are priced far beyond reach. Example: A county banker told a reporter that to buy one of Inyo's available single-family dwellings priced in an "average" range of $75,000, the purchaser would have to earn $40,000 to $50,000 a year just to qualify for the loan, and that he would also need to have in ready cash something like $8000 to cover a down payment.

Nearly all of Inyo's new houses have price tags far beyond the $75,000 figure. Asked about "housing" in Inyo County, Planning Director Sherburne stated flatly that "There are no plans (for houses) for lower or moderate incomes. That's the concern of those who are now looking for a moratorium on building in Bishop until the Bishop Community Plan is complete."

But to get an official moratorium, there must exist a "clear-cut threat" to the community. The board of supervisors (fearful perhaps of the ire of developers who want to make it while the making's good) has decided unanimously that there is no such threat. And the planning commission agrees.

Sherburne thinks some of the concerns are realistic, however. Once the sub-division maps are final, housing growth becomes locked into a pattern, as he explains it. Sherburne sees "a modest increase in growth" for now, and it all seems to be in conventional, albeit high-priced, housing. In Inyo County a "cheap" home costs about $60,000, and from there up the sky is the limit.

Some observers are concerned that the fact of Inyo's limited growth space may create in the long-run an exclusive or elitest condition in which all but upper-middle and upper-income groups are excluded. Some of that problem was seen at Mammoth this past winter when 300 jobs went begging (in a state reeling under high unemployment figures, and high welfare costs) because willing and available workers simply could find no place to live at Mammoth and very few cared very much for the commuter-

(See HOUSING on Page 9)

*

Candlelight dining
beside a cool
mountain stream
5:30 - 10 pm, 7 days





RESERVATIONS
387-2370

PATIO:
Live
entertainment:

Tyroleans
POLKAS • WALTZES • MODERN

Thurs.-Sun.

Paradise Restaurant
On Lower Rock Creek
15 miles North of Bishop off Hwy. 395



Hi.
I'm Pete Larson.
Lone Pine.
I'm an Independent
Insurance Agent.

I don't work for
a company.
I work for you.

If I can be of any
help (I can),
call me.

YOUR Independent Insurance AGENT SERVES YOU FIRST

R.F. OYLER ASSOCIATES
PETE LARSON - Insurance
124 N. Main, Lone Pine, California
Phone 876-4105

Special
Thurs.-Sat.
Aug. 3-5

PULLAWAY
BREAD
SMALL LOAF, Reg. $1.25
$1.09

ALSO, SMALL APPLE PULLAWAY BREAD

Schat's
Dutch Bakeries, Inc.
Home of the "Original Sheepherder Bread" ® 1938

NEWS-LETTER'S VIEWFINDER:

VALLEY FOTOPAGE

With a gaggle of geese and guys, a goat and a garden, a former award-winning television news man presents "the good news" - the Gospel - and struggles to survive. Bob Harke leads his Lone Pine boys in prayer and hard work at Christ's Chapel of the Pacific, one of the few effective youth programs in the county. More than a hundred boys have passed through the doors of the former "Boys' Ranch of the Pacific" since Harke founded it about three years ago. Local youth - and a few adults - now use the "ranch" as a social and religious center. All faiths are represented. Popular among the area kids is the menagerie of animals which provide amusement - and food - for Harke and his resident devotees. Using scrap lumber, the boys are building a teen center, plan "open house" in August.





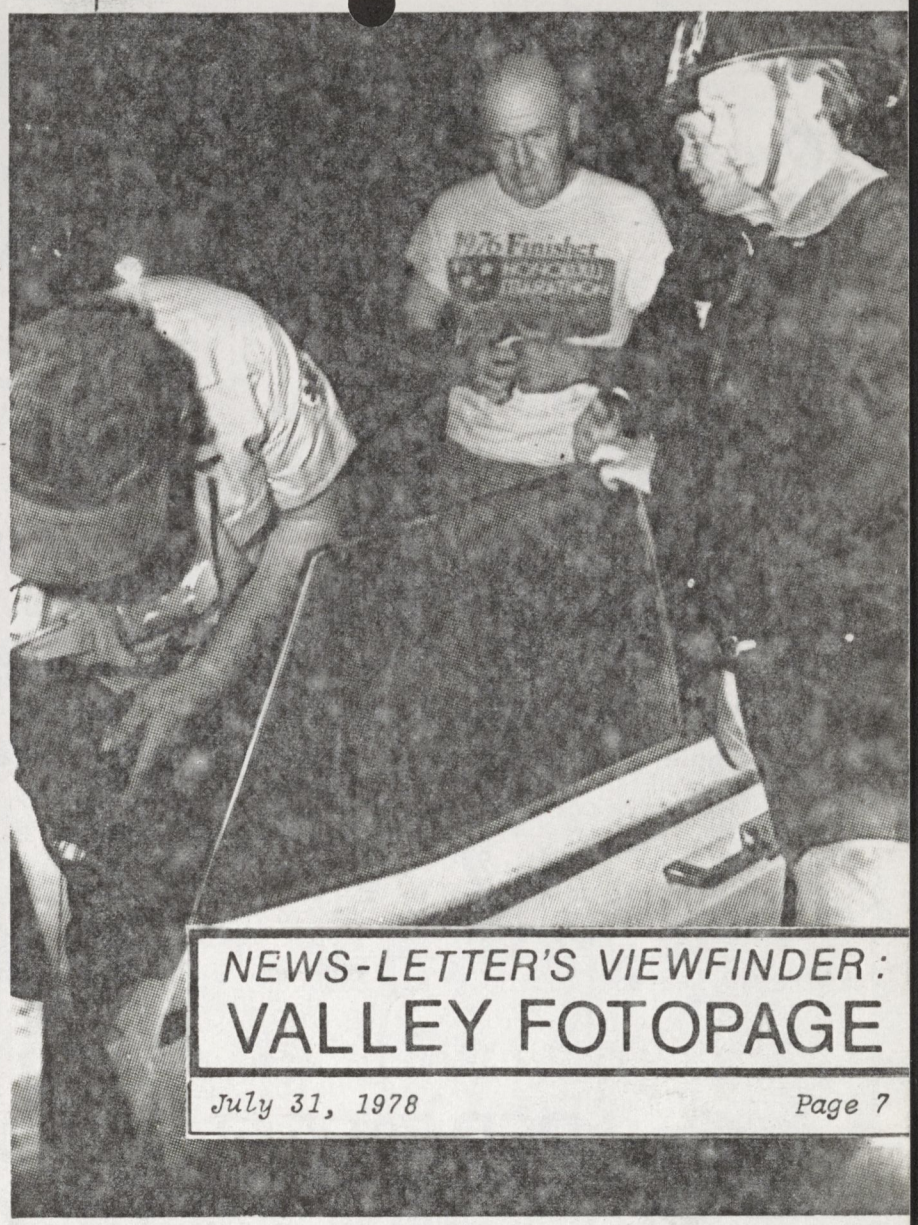


"Ranch" Hands Jeff Saxey, Jim Oldaker and Lee Dessaux

AUTHOR

Thaddeus Kostrubala, psychiatrist and author of a best-seller, "The Joy of Running," got help fast when his car caught fire after a blowout. Although he was dressed for it, he didn't have to jog into town to get help; A deputy with a handy fire extinguisher, backed up by firemen, saved the car. Kostrubala, recently the feature of a TIME Magazine article, was driving with his wife to their Mammoth home.



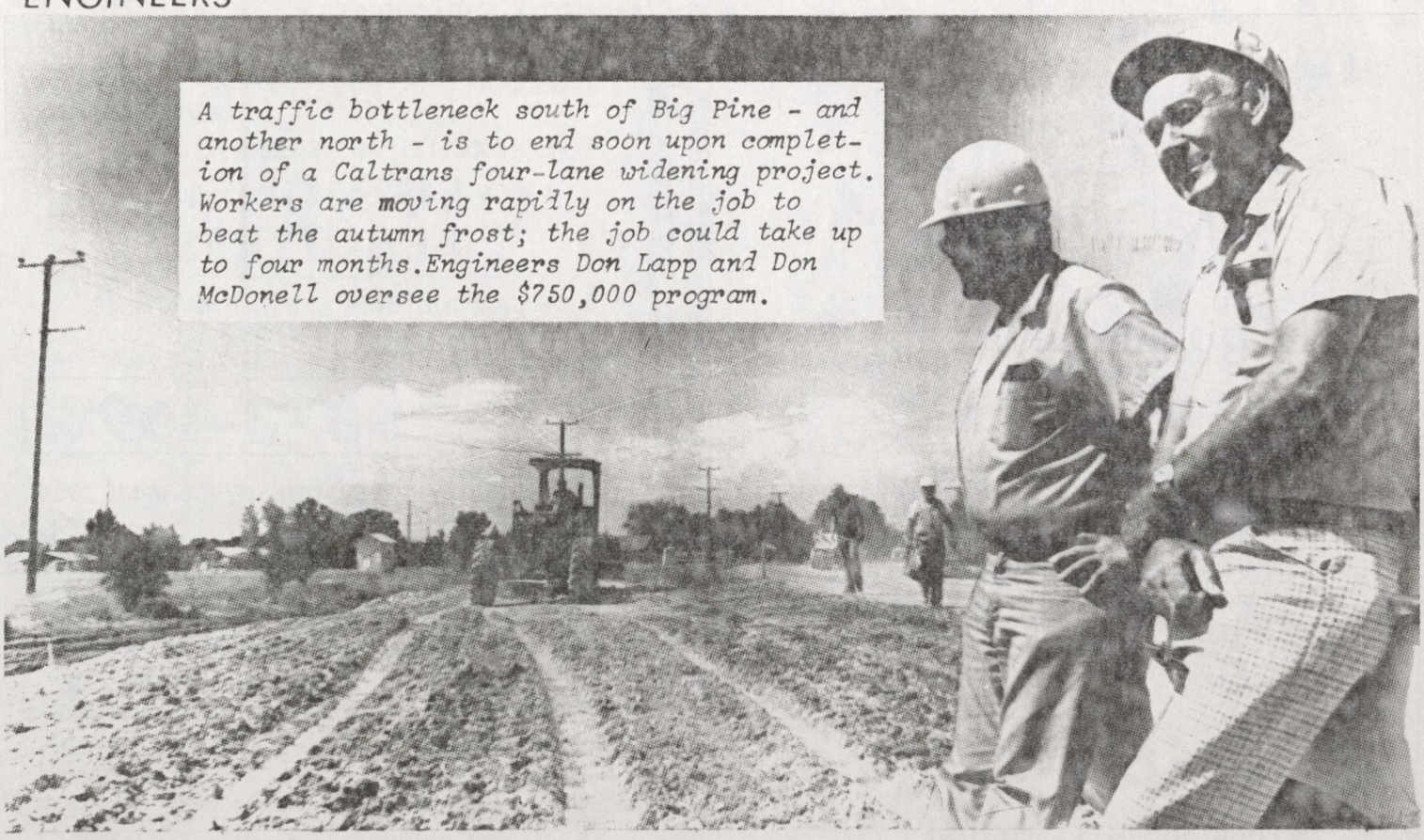


LAWYER

One of the Inyo lawyers challenging the recent appointment of a new public defender, reads Section 27701 of a California law that says a public defender must have at least a year's experience to hold the office. Her argument is with the county, however, and not the new defender who she recently hired as co-counsel on a case of her own.

ENGINEERS

A traffic bottleneck south of Big Pine - and another north - is to end soon upon completion of a Caltrans four-lane widening project. Workers are moving rapidly on the job to beat the autumn frost; the job could take up to four months. Engineers Don Lapp and Don McDonell oversee the $750,000 program.



One Seventy Seven

177 SHORT STREET
BISHOP, CALIFORNIA 93514

COMMERCIAL SERVICE CENTER
OFFICES-BUSINESSES-WAREHOUSE

NOW LEASING—Available Sept. 1, 1978
LOW RATES VARY WITH LEASE

Air conditioning and heating, ample parking, choice of warehouse door or windows.

1170 sq. ft. 990 sq. ft.
1170 sq. ft. 755 sq. ft.
755 Sq. Ft.

Already leased: 755 Sq. ft., 2350 Sq. ft.

Call: 873-3645, or write to:

RED CARPET REALTORS
873-7138
115 W. Line St. Bishop, CA 93514

The REPAIR SHOP



CAR AND HOME STEREOS
Exclusively ~
140 Whitney Alley – Bishop
• Telephone 873-3660

Just plain good cookin'

The FEED BAG CAFE

ON HIGHWAY 395 * INDEPENDENCE



WHAT TO DO ? ? ? ?



. . . A GOOD MOVIE !!

Let's go see...



AUG. 2-3-4-5

THE BAD NEWS Bears GO TO JAPAN ALL NEW! NEVER SEEN BEFORE! PG

BISHOP THEATRE

PHONE 873-3575 · SHOWTIME 7 P.M.

Upholstering



- FURNITURE BUILT TO ORDER – REPAIRED & REBUILT
- BOAT COVERS
- AUTO & TRUCK SEATS
- WOOD REPAIRING & REFINISHING

– ALL AT Fendon's, BISHOP'S EXCLUSIVE DEALER FOR

SIMMONS BEAUTYREST

WE CAN CUSTOM MAKE ANY MATTRESS TO ANY SIZE - "ODD SIZE TOO"

CALL 873-4698

SERVING THE HIGH SIERRA SINCE 1950

Fendon Furniture & Upholstery Company

IN THE BANK OF AMERICA PARKING LOT
175 E. PINE BISHOP



North of Bishop, rays of the late afternoon sun broke through a cloud cover that promised still more rain for the valley. But as a new week began, it was a promise left unkept and Bishop suffered under humid heat.

HOUSING, Continued

bus system from Bishop. Historically, in this country, attractive, tourist-oriented communities have shown a tendency toward slow, tedious growth to a point of wealth, followed by a fast fall when their particular local fad (like skiing, in the past 10 years) waned as a public pastime. For years hot springs spas were the *in* thing (Saratoga, Mineral Wells, etc.). In every case, low and middle-class life eroded, priced out of the country by much-wanted and scarce room to build a mansion. The instability of which Sherburne speaks later asserted itself in unhappy ways, both for the establishment owning the land and the working classes deprived of it; it's no fun owning a mansion, it seems, if there is no one to mop up after the house-warming.

What are the developers of Inyo's classy dwellings doing, and for how much? A few, like Bishop's Gordon Holmes, are primarily in the lot business - but they'll erect a few houses on their lots to set the pace for the rest of the tract. Holmes has 31 lots in the first phase of a development near Bishop; 72 altogether. His lots go for about $40,000, houses for $100,000.

Another developer, Tom Dempsey, has 52 lots for future sale on the west side of Lazy A Drive - and beyond that more than 200 lots, all planned for conventional homes that will go for something on the ritzy side of $75,000. Many others deal on similar levels, and the county is not without its share, perhaps even

(More on HOUSING, Page 10)

real estate . . .

. . . COMMERCIAL, RESIDENTIAL, BUSINESS OPPORTUNITY, LAND . . .

Week's Best Buys:

1. FIVE LOTS, CARTAGO: *300-foot highway frontage. Good motel site. PLUS: one lot in town for a home. $21,700 takes it all.*
2. LONE PINE: *Large home with spacious, park-like grounds. $115,000.*
3. THE RANCH MOTEL AT LONE PINE: *Seven units. Great return on investment. $75,000.*

Century 21™ REALTOR®

DOROTHY BONNEFIN/manager
LONE PINE REALTY

bus. (714) 876-4121 res. (714) 876-4442

PAT ROBERTS/associate res. (714) 876-5864

CLYDE GEORGE/associate bus. (714) 876-4121

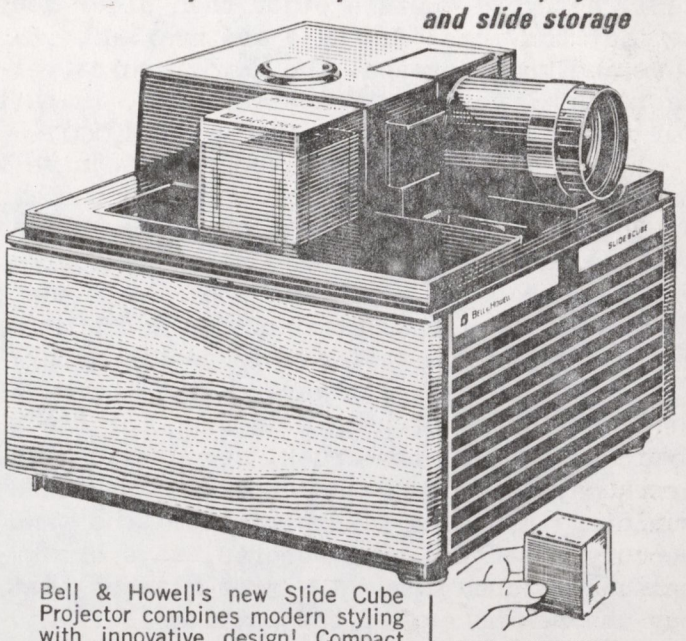
so. main street, suite 108 lone pine, california 93545

NEW THINKING FROM BELL & HOWELL

the new

SLIDE CUBE™ PROJECTOR

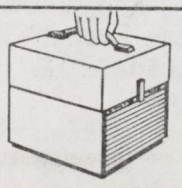
a revolutionary new concept in color-slide projection and slide storage



Bell & Howell's new Slide Cube Projector combines modern styling with innovative design! Compact Slide Cube keeps slides in exact order. Stores 640 slides in the same space as one bulky round tray . . . at a fraction of the cost.

Other features include a long life quartz-halogen lamp, slide recall, lens elevation, and easy access to slide changing mechanism. Some models include AUTOMATIC FOCUSING.

THE SLIDE CUBE — compact, dust-proof, holds 40 cardboard-mounted slides ready for instant showing.



MODERN STYLING— blends with any decor, compact size only 9" x 9" x 8".

PHILLIPS' CAMERA HOUSE
186 No. MAIN • BISHOP

HOUSING, Continued

its overabundance, of design talent. The local architects make good-looking houses geared toward utility and esthetics - just what the doctor (or lawyer, or executive) ordered when he cashed in his chips in the L.A. suburbs (taking the profit on inflated price of his former home) and headed for Inyo's villatic scenery, its casual lifestyle, and his new uncrowded neighborhood somewhere on a hill or mesa overlooking something besides freeways.

So what do the poor folks do? Theoretically, they buy the houses vacated by the *nouveau riche*, and everybody from the bottom level up moves up a step. *Theoretically*, we say. But in fact, due to peculiarities of Inyo's DWP-bound land limitations, the system may not work that well here. Inyo's economy, lacking basic industry, is hardly the place for the upward mobile "average" wage-earner. The lack of living room (Hitler's *liebensraum*) eventually winds up with economic - and housing - problems, and often as not, chaos.

For now, there is a slight lag in sales of some of the county's up-for-grabs speculation housing ("Spec" Houses, they're called in the trade). Realtor Ron Stone said that three months ago about a dozen "specs" were built and half were sold, mostly for amounts in the six-figure range. He explained that, for now at least, financial availability is low and interest rates are up. Besides, June and July are hot months - in everything but selling houses. August and September, he says, may be better.

Most potential buyers are looking for three-bedroom houses. Many of the people who buy them are retired and semi-retired upper-middle types from the southland. Apparently they want the extra room to encourage visits by the grandchildren.

For the young families, things look, well, not good. Little other than older houses that they can "fix up," are available to them and many move on. The demographics reflect that Inyo is an "older" county, in part for that reason. Who at 30 has $100,000?

But that's fine for those that "have it made." Inyo, to the latter group, is becoming or soon will become at present rates, a place to live in more-or-less exclusive comfort - without the noisy irritations of the young folk. But also without their brain and brawn.

How are the real estate people doing? Just fine, thanks. But here again, the market is the class of people looking for the typical "acre-by-the-creek," even though the creek may be owned by somebody in an office building in L.A. A saleswoman for Lone Pine's Century 21 office, Pat Roberts, says brisk sales are found among the same classes that buy the new homes, if the setting is right. "Many of them have sold their homes of many years in order to move up here, so they have lots of money to play with."

And where, in Inyo County, is the "American Dream" (The house, the two cars, the 2.6 kids, the junior exec job, etc.) to be found?

Somewhere out in West Bishop, they saw it flying rapidly by, on its way to somewhere else, looking for young opportunity. Mopping up, thanks, was not their trip.

SUBSCRIBE BEFORE AUGUST 15, AND WRITE YOURSELF A 10% DISCOUNT ON ALL ORDERS



LUCKY TO BE ALIVE, *this young southland woman went out of control on Highway 395 and rolled her sports car twice, escaping injury. She tried to wave off reporters at the scene and when asked how fast she was driving curtly replied "fifty-five!" Witnesses to the mishap, who called for help via a CB radio, had another answer: "Well, very, very fast," they said. "Go away !," she ordered the reporters, and they did - with this interesting picture of her anger.*

LIFE AT 55

Highway Radar

AS SPEED INCREASES, SO DOES THE DEATH TOLL: STATEWIDE RADAR MAY BE ADOPTED

THE INYO BODY-COUNT has already reached a record high - "the worst in ten 10 years," says a California Highway Patrol official - a reflection of a statewide trend that has slowly increased since the "gasoline shortage" years. Nobody, it seems, really wants to observe the national 55-mile-an-hour limit that was set some years back when everybody thought the U.S. was running out of gas. Although the 55 limit saved only a trickle of fuel, it did for a time save a lot of lives.

There is no longer any doubt in practically anyone's mind that there is to be found a direct ratio between the nation's average speed and its death toll.

At Bishop, this area's top highway traffic watcher, Highway Patrol Lieutenant Howard Hurlbut, reported with genuine concern that in the first six months of the year there were three fatalities - and then in July alone, six more, including those who were killed in no fewer than three head-on collisions. "Head-on" usually means someone was moving fast, trying to pass moderately-paced traffic, and underestimated the distance to oncoming cars.

"People just don't buy the 55-mile limit," said Hurlbut. To confirm his suspicions, Hurlbut took a radar set to an area just south of Bishop to have an electronic look at north-

(See RADAR on next page

"With Voluntary Adherence, Fatalities Took a Dramatic Drop..."

RADAR, Continued

bound traffic. The result: "Eighty-five percent were going 63.4 miles per hour," he said. The figure for the southbound traffic - that just leaving town - was slower by only on-tenth of a mile-an-hour, enough to hike death statistics.

Did the imposition of the 55 limit have much affect on Inyo traffic? "When we had voluntary adherence to 55," said Hurlbut, "fatalities took a dramatic drop, but they've been creeping up."

As the gruesome figures mount, some state officials unfearful of public response (Californians seem firmly determined as a political body and as a mobile society to drive about 65) are turning once again to radar as a possible solution. Will radar help? Says Hurlbut: "Radar is quite effective. California is the only state that is not allowed to use it; or, at least the legislature has said there are no dollars available for it.

"But there is some legislation afoot; the commission wants to get federal funds for radar at no state cost."

Meanwhile, the Inyo Board of Supervisors, responding to a nudge by the Independence Civic Club and others, have recently passed a resolution in support of radar legislation. But, statewide, there is some organized resistance: that of the trucking industry which claims it loses dollars - a large amount of them - when the drivers on the highway are restricted to 55. Last week in an eastern state some independent truckers attempted to prove - unsuccessfully, as it turned out - that they also save fuel when allowed to drive "at their own speed" based on highway conditions. On a test track, which they later claimed was not "the same as real highways," their failure to prove their point was embarrassingly revealed on national television. As speed increased so did fuel consumption - inevitably.

Meanwhile, highway patrolmen are at a distinct disadvantage in trying to hold the good ole boys of the trucking industry within the legal limit; the truckers have an elaborate CB Radio network on which they warn each other about every lurking patrol car. They also have elaborate rear-view mirror systems that make "clocking" a difficult procedure. Now, many of the highway patrolmen have CB radios and hear themselves reported; once it occurs they know it is almost always futile to fall in behind a trucker long enough to take a legal observation of the speed.

"We know radar is needed," said the lieutenant. "It's the only way to get a definite clock."

But tourists, not truckers, may be the biggest problem in Inyo, as the "accident season" reaches it peak here. Hurlbut said the "recreation vehicles tend to slow down," and the "adventuresome drivers" try to pass. Then trouble begins.

Statewide, traffic deaths are definitely up: 2400 people have died so far. And the projections for August are grim. It is expected to be the "worst month."

"55" might save a few.

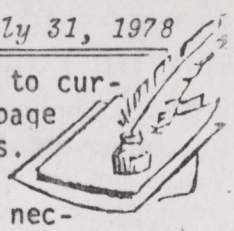
FOR KIDS AT LONE PINE: TIPS FROM A PRO

A non-profit program of organized summer fun, headed by Tom Newell (who, out of his gym clothes, is associated with the Inyo probation department), is staging its annual "High Sierra Basketball Camp" at Lone Pine. For the first time, the camp offered its learning potential to girls, and they responded by the score. This week, the boys take over.

BASKETBALL CAMP



FORUM
LETTERS AND COMMENT



The NEWS-LETTER welcomes letters and comment relevant to current public issues. The editors will publish on this page those considered timely and stating concise viewpoints. Letters and statements should be addressed to PO Box 531, Independence 93526. The editors remind NEWS-LETTER's readers that publication of a letter does not necessarily imply that the editors are in agreement with its content, or assure its accuracy.

TAX MONEY AND SUBSIDIZING PRIVATE ENTERPRISE: THE ISSUE AT BISHOP

Dear Editors,

It's about time we had a politician we can trust with our tax money. Councilman Pearson is doing what all those so-called "representatives" of the people should be doing: putting a stop to the taking from the "have-nots" and and giving it to those that have.

When the Bishop City Council gives away $50,000 to the chamber of commerce to promote tourism, it only stuffs the chamber members' pockets with money - money they can spend on themselves, do with as they wish. It's robbing from the poor and giving to the rich - welfare for the $40,000-a-year-and-up class.

We need more politicians like Councilman Pearson - in Sacramento and Washington - who aren't afraid to stand up for what is democratic, American, and right in this country.

- L.M. Headley
Bishop

(Editor's note: Reader Headley makes reference to a proposal by Councilman Pearson that would end Bishop's municipal subsidization of the "promotion" program of the Bishop chamber. Pearson had raised the question of whether such a tax-supportel program of essentially private business interests is ethical. In any case, Pearson was unanimously defeated in his opposition to the payment, and it came to light that even his job had been threatened. Pearson, who now proposes a ballot initiative that would limit such subsidies, touches on the issue in another letter that reached the FORUM desk last week; Pearson's letter follows.)

News-Letter:

In response to your July 17 issue, I would like to clarify any rumors that have circulated in the Bishop community.

The threats (including threats to my job), and directed to other individuals associated with me, are of an anonymous nature. The utterances that I have heard - to the effect that these threats come from the doorsteps of the Bishop Chamber of Commerce members and from its directors, past and present - fall on skeptical ears. After all, the economic well-being of its members was only possible through free enterprise, protected by a democratic society, and based on the will of the many and not that of an elite few.

Speculation to the effect that their intention is to intimidate myself and others into a retreat is probably unwarranted; such rumored action, I am sure, would be far beneath their stature.

- Peter L. Pearson
City Councilman
Bishop

(Editor's note: NEWS-LETTER emphatically agrees; that is why no such speculation was allowed to enter into NEWS-LETTER's July 17 report on the issue. But the philosophical implications remain unresolved: To what extent does the "average" tax-payer derive a personal benefit when his tax dollar goes to support the business community in which he or she may - or may not - have either direct or indirect interest.)

***

THE E.R.A. AND INDEPENDENCE: ON - OR OFF - THE RECORD

To the Inyo County News-Letter Staff:
SUBJECT: Blatant contradiction.

Please refer to your News-Letter issue dated July 17, 1978, Page 12, Item "ERA and Inyo County," Paragraph 1.

This note will be brief and to the point.

According to the above reference you had stated correctly: "...almost immediately contacted by an Independence women's group who asked her (Reporter Kessler) to 'share' her Washington experience, but only on the condition that she withold any news reports on the meeting. Reluctantly, Kessler agreed, and appeared for the talk only to find..." and so on. Emphasis is placed on such oral agreements which evidently are false and very misleading. Clearly you stated "Kessler agreed" not to report on the meeting, and yet there appeared the story.

Can you explain such a discrepancy?

- A Woman
Independence

(Name witheld on request)

(Editor's note: NEWS-LETTER, which, incidentally, is always "blatant," though seldom contradictory, is happy to explain as best it can. The problem lies with individual interpretation of what "coverage" means. In NEWS-LETTER's view, "coverage" of a meeting means more-or-less detailed publication of what occurred, what was said, its aims and motivations, etc., or, in the present case, all of the things excluded from the July 17 ERA story. NEWS-LETTER's writer did not consider her highly limited report (i.e., the fact that the meeting was held, her presence at the meeting, and one quote uttered after the meeting) as a breach of oral contract.)

Send me the NEWS-LETTER for the number of weeks checked below. I subscribe with the understanding that future cost cuts are retroactive and will be credited to my subscription if I subscribe now.

☐ 50 Wks. $25 ☐ 25 Wks. $13 ☐ 12 Wks. $7

☐ Payment enclosed ☐ Please bill me

Name

Address

City State Zip

FINE POINTS OF THE LAW

Public Defender Issue

(Related Photo, Page 7)

SOME INYO LAWYERS CHALLENGE THE COUNTY'S CONTRACT HIRING OF A PUBLIC DEFENDER; THEY SAY THE "SPIRIT," IF NOT THE "LETTER," OF THE LAW HAS BEEN VIOLATED BY HIS NEED FOR MORE EXPERIENCE

ONE AT LEAST OF INYO'S ELECTED OFFICIALDOM expressed a kind of uncomfortable concern: "I'm not sure," he said, "just what the reaction or the feeling of those people over in jail might be to any publicity about this."

He referred to the recent muffled rumblings and speculations, now open, public challenges, to the recent hiring of Inyo County's new public defender.

No one finds fault with the man himself, a Bishop lawyer, Dean Stout, who began his public defender job this week. Indeed, one of the critics of the appointment only recently called in Stout as co-counsel to help in a major criminal appeal case.

A Lone Pine attorney, Peggy Noland, publicly raised the complaint that in recent weeks had been a matter only privately argued in philosophical terms among the county's legal community. "It would appear," she staunchly maintains, "that the office will have to be vacated and the interviews re-opened." But the officials responsible for Stout's appointment are not likely to begin such proceedings. They maintain that a state law on which Noland bases her argument, applies only to lawyers "hired" by a county for the public defender's office. That law requires that the public defender have at least a year's working experience. Stout's "employers" - treading perhaps on a very fine line of technicality - point out that Stout was not in fact "hired" in the usual sense of the word, but that he was "appointed" under a contract, and only as a private contractor, to handle the defense of Inyo's criminal defendants. They also argue with a compelling reasoning that Stout, who is "about 30," was appointed on the recommendation of the resigning public defender and a local judge, Judicial Judge Don Chapman, who apparently felt that in terms of expertise, if not experience, Stout was capable.

Nor does another lawyer, president of the bar association, question Stout's integrity: With Lawyer Charles Karpinski it's a matter of legal right and wrong. "Section 27701 of the California Code requires that the person filing for the office of public defender have at least one year of practice in the California courts. Stout does not meet those qualifications." It was the code section first called to attention by Noland.

The district attorney (in effect, Stout's future adversary in court proceedings) argues the case for the county: "My opinion is that the section very plainly applies to counties with an office of public defender. We do not have that. We contract for public defender-like services." As for Stout's professional ability, D.A. L.H. Gibbons says, "I have seen him. And some attorneys of numerous years of experience have not impressed me as he did."

To that, Karpinski retorted: "I think the D.A. is absolutely wrong. Dean Stout is a friend of mine. But to my knowledge he has never tried a criminal case. My primary concern is that this move shows contempt of lawyers and the rights of the defendant to have competent counsel." The point is not without a certain merit: Other lawyers have discussed the possibility of Inyo County being suddenly saddled by a caseload of appeals based on the defendants' "right to competent counsel."

Karpinski may in fact take action in the hiring matter. "I haven't decided if I will file a writ against the board of supervisors. I have dictated a writ of prohibition. If I'm right, every conviction could be reversed and it would cost the county and taxpayers a lot of money. Defending criminal cases is not fun and games. The amount of money in the (county) budget is ridiculous. I find it impossible to believe that Stout is in a position to try a felony case starting August 1."

And Karpinski may lead the way in that direction. "I will absolutely file an appeal on any conviction," he said.

Good news for the county's criminal defendants who now have a predictable "reaction or feeling" about the matter.

But Stout's own abilities may win the county's case if not universal approval. He passed his bar examination about nine months ago, (In three months, he would be technically "legal" in any interpretation of the law) and set to work as a lawyer at Bishop. When even his critics call him in for consultation and to write up some of their criminal appeals, it would appear that he has won their respect as a defense lawyer. He was chosen by the interviewing committee over several other applicants. But, admittedly, when it came down to it, "he had the lowest bid."

NEWS BRIEFS

THE SUPERVISORS IN PRIVATE

"EXECUTIVE SESSIONS" SWORN TO SECRECY; MAYHUGH MAY - OR MAY NOT - BUY THE TV SYSTEM; BROMLEY "CLARIFIES" AN ELECTION POINT; AND WEST BISHOP WANTS NO ROAD

UNTIL RECENTLY - in the months since the county's media community began showing new signs of life - the Inyo Board of Supervisors had seldom refused requests for at least "general" comment on their executive, or closed, sessions. Things are different nowadays at the courthouse.

Although there have been no reports damaging to Inyo's position on many "executive" actions, the supervisors recently "swore" among themselves that no word concerning executive sessions would go to the press. Their recalcitrant refusal in recent weeks has raised the ire of more than one of the county's reporters and not a few other observers and officials. Under law, the supervisors can hold executive meetings only for the purpose of discussing "personnel" or "litigation" matters. It is precisely in those areas that many of the county's more controversial goof-ups have occurred. In one "executive session" the action of the board - taken far outside the arena of public scrutiny - has brought down a lawsuit, and others may even now be pending. As the public offices and officers become more secretive (shades of Watergate), the public becomes more uneasy and quick on the draw.

It was the county administrator who last week admitted that the supervisors had "sworn

(See NEWS BRIEFS on Page 14)

NEWS BRIEFS, Continued

not to reveal any details of the meetings." Administrator Smith mentioned that some of the content of executive sessions "had gotten into the news."

Smith's words were echoed by Supervisor Chairman Richard McDonald. "It's an ongoing concern," he said. "Some of the things we have discussed in executive session have been quoted in the news. We feel it's privileged information on litigation and personnel matters."

True; the Brown Act allows private supervisorial sessions that are restricted to discussions of personnel and legal issues. But do the Inyo supervisors ever discuss anything else at such meetings? And why the sudden decision to swear themselves to secrecy? In the first case it is clear they've discussed, if nothing else, relations with the media at such sessions; as for the latter question, there is some speculation, and at least a partial confirmation from one supervisor, that some officials feel they were embarrassed by revelation of their actions that they'd have preferred to keep out of the public eye.

So what happens when other matters do come up - matters beyond "litigation" and "personnel." Answered McDonald: "We just kind of back off from it."

***

THE SUPERIOR COURT here has denied a writ of *habeas corpus* filed in a statutory rape case and based on the constitutionality of California's statutory rape law. Attorneys for Frank Jiminez who was charged in such a case involving a 14-year-old girl, claim that the law protects under-age girls, but not under-age boys, and is therefore unconstitutional. As one of Jiminez' attorneys, Peggy Noland, explains it: "A mature woman can go out and seduce a young boy. If she happens to get pregnant, she can bring the full force of the law to bear for support of the child. The law now protects only young girls from seduction." Jiminez, a mature male, was released on his own recognizance, pending trial.

***

THE PLANNING COMMISSION WAS THWARTED once again. The commission had required that a *cul de sac* road in a sub-division be moved to allow for future opening for a through road. But the neighboring residents in West Bishop were having none of that; they claim that a through road would increase traffic diminishing their property values, their atmosphere of privacy, and their exclusiveness." The supervisors, wise in the ways of West Bishop aspirations, agreed, so they over-ruled the planning commissioners. Said Supervisor Herb London who is no stranger to West Bishop: "I hate to go against the commission, but..." There was one no-vote in the issue, that of Supervisor Dick Engel who explained: "I voted for the people of the future. They'll look back and ask why we did this in 1978."

***

BISHOP COMMUNICATIONS ENTREPRENEUR ROY MAYHUGH said the bank will cover it - his loan to buy a cable TV franchise at Big Pine. But the supervisors, who must grant the cable franchise, are wary of small business loans. County Administrator John K. Smith said Mayhugh's loan agreement does not sound like the bank will cover the loan. He had left the board room to call the bank in question. Upon returning he told the board members, "It's best to hold this over for one week, to clear up the financial matters." Meanwhile, Mayhugh, with unflagging optimism, paints a rosey TV picture for Big Pine viewers. He would improve amplification of signals there and add several channel selections "within 90 days."

***

COUNTY CLERK RITA BROMLEY wanted to clarify a point in the 3rd District Supervisorial Race controversy (which has gone into court). The voters in question, says Bromley, "were not 'turned away' at the polls. They thought they were in the right precinct, and we thought they were, but as it turned out they were not." The voters in question would have made the difference in a tie vote that throws two challengers against Supervisor Wilma Muth into a "plurality" race for election in November. Muth, who failed to get a majority in June, sees a distinct advantage in the tie between Moe Jacobson and Roger Glidden. Their split vote might well give her the November victory. Meanwhile, a lawsuit filed by Jacobson - claiming one of the errant voters would have voted for him, has taken Glidden to court in the matter.

***

THIS SATURDAY, the Republicans come to town again. Candidates Thomas, Wyman and Snyder, will greet voters at Bishop City Park.

eastern sierra news service
INYO COUNTY NEWS-LETTER
INDEPENDENCE, CALIFORNIA
JOHN HESTON • BENETT KESSLER
878-2582 & 878-2381
"May the news in your day be good news every day"

All correspondence to the Inyo COUNTY NEWS-LETTER should be addressed to PO Box 531 or 275 Independence, California 93526

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

US POSTAGE PAID
BULK RATE
Independence, Cal.
Permit #6
93526

To:

Buck Gibbons
Drawer D
Independence, CA 93526

DA